

GUIDELINES FOR GIVERS

Thank you for giving your gifts, concern and time to the Alexandria family, foster child or senior or disabled citizen you are sponsoring for this Holiday Season. Knowing that you or your group will bring joy to a neighbor is a great blessing and its own reward. The family, foster child or senior/disabled person you are sponsoring is receiving services from the Department of Community and Human Services. They are eligible because they are experiencing serious economic, medical or psychological distress. Sometimes the only support system they have is a network of government agencies. Sometimes they have never before sought assistance from others. As a member of the Alexandria community, YOU are reaching out to extend a hand to them, as they face a variety of crises and traumas. YOU are bringing joy to someone's life this holiday season!

The Wish List provided is to be considered a guide. Community volunteers like you have helped parents record their Wish Lists. The Wish Lists are limited to CHILDREN ONLY (to include necessary clothing, one toy (or a very few) or recreational item, depending on age, and a book), a grocery gift card, and ONE family or major additional gift. **The items listed are truly needed.** You may purchase as many or as few of the items as you decide. **Purchasing decisions are completely up to you.** Please remember, however, that children and teens watch the same shows and shop in the same stores as their peers and often wish for items and brands they see in the popular culture. However, we continue to put the emphasis on **"Building Bodies and Brains,"** as in past years. **We suggest you spend approximately \$125 per person or family member,** depending on age, request, etc. Please balance the number of gifts across all children in the family, as you would for your own family.

- **A note on used clothing and other used items:** these may be welcomed, but please be sure they are lightly used, clean and are not wrapped as presents and are not the only presents the child receives.
- **If you give a bike, please also provide a bike helmet.** If you give a bike to one of the kids in the family, please also give a bike to other children in the family who have asked for a bike.
- **Please include gift receipts, especially for clothing, if possible.**

Grocery store gift card. EVERY family and senior/disabled citizen **NEEDS** a grocery gift card in these difficult times. Please purchase a card for the store (Shoppers, Giant, or Safeway) that is listed on the Wish List, if you are able. Denominations of \$25 and \$50 work best.

Families genuinely appreciate your generosity. They may not be accustomed to, or know how to, express their thanks in a way that you may expect. For example, you may or may not receive a thank you note, forwarded through the staff. **However, knowing that you have brought joy to one of your neighbors is its own intrinsic reward.**

If you deliver the gifts directly to the home of the family or senior/disabled person, they have given permission for you to receive their name, phone number and address. This face-to-face meeting can be very positive for both giver and receiver or it can be fraught with discomfort. Please be as understanding as possible of the awkward circumstances. Always, keeping confidentiality is the greatest concern. Please respect the privacy of the family or senior/disabled citizen to whom you deliver gifts.

Please call Krystal Fenwick, Coordinator of Community Resources, at 703.746.5663 with any questions or concerns or email holidayssharing@alexandriava.gov. Again, thank you for your caring support.